

IN THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) A method of constructing a preformed solder bar made-ready for installing a microchip, comprising:

forming a socket on a first surface of a microchip, such that the socket has predetermined physical dimensions complementary to those of a microchip connection pad footprint occupied by at least one contact pad area on the microchip, the socket presenting a conductive base capable of bonding to solder; and

~~bonding~~ forming a solder layer in substantially continuous contact with ~~to the~~ conductive base to ~~place~~ form a solder bar in the socket and place the microchip in made-ready condition for installation.

2. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the microchip contains a silicon wafer and the step of forming the socket comprises

depositing an adhesion layer onto the wafer, and

depositing under-bump-metallization (UBM) material contacting the adhesion layer to complete formation of the conductive base.

3. (Original) The method of claim 2, wherein the step of depositing the adhesion layer includes depositing a conductor selected from the group consisting of aluminum, nickel-vanadium, titanium, tungsten and copper.

4. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 2, wherein the step of depositing the ~~UBM~~ UBM material includes depositing a conductor selected from at least one of titanium, tungsten, vanadium, tin, copper, aluminum, gold, silver, and lead.

5. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the step of forming the socket includes forming the socket such that the socket has predetermined dimensions complementary to a microchip connection pad footprint having a geometry selected from the group consisting of rectangular, "E," "L," and "U" shapes.

6. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the step of forming the socket includes the physical dimensions selected from the group consisting of ring, square, and circular shapes.

7. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the step of forming the ~~socket includes the physical dimensions being complimentary to~~ solder layer comprises forming a solder bar having a planar rectilinear configuration.

8. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the step of forming the ~~socket includes the physical dimensions being complimentary to~~ solder layer comprises forming a solder bar having a planar curvilinear configuration.

9. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, ~~wherein~~ the step of forming the socket ~~further~~ comprising a step of forming a passivation layer on substantially all of the first surface, exclusive of an area where the socket is located.

10. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 9, wherein the step of forming the passivation layer includes the steps of:
applying one or more layers of passivation material to the entire first surface;
and
removing a selected portion[[s]] of the passivation material ~~covering the~~from
an area where the socket is to be located.

11. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 10, wherein the step of applying one or more layers of passivation material includes applying at least one layer selected from the group consisting of polysilicon, silicon dioxide, silicon nitride, oxynitride, polyimide and benzocyclobutane.

12. (Withdrawn - Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, further ~~comprises~~comprising depositing a non-solder base metal in the socket after the step of forming the socket and prior to the step of ~~bonding~~forming a solder layer, such that the solder bar contains the non-solder base metal and the solder in respective layers.

13. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 12, wherein the step of depositing the non-solder base metal includes electroplating the non-solder base metal.

14. (Withdrawn - Currently Amended) ~~[[A]]~~The method of claim 12, wherein the step of depositing the non-solder base metal includes screen printing at least one base metal layer.

15. (Withdrawn - Currently Amended) The method of claim 14, wherein the step of depositing the non-solder base metal includes depositing ~~the non-solder base metal~~a layer selected from the group consisting of copper, gold, platinum, palladium, silver, aluminum, tin, bismuth, lead, titanium, tungsten, and vanadium and alloys thereof.

16. (Withdrawn - Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the step of ~~bonding~~forming a solder layer includes electroplating one or more solder layers ~~onto the conductive base.~~

17. (Withdrawn - Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the step of ~~bonding~~forming a solder layer includes screen printing one or more solder layers ~~onto the conductive base.~~

18 - 24. (Cancelled)

25. (New) The method of claim 1, wherein forming a socket comprises forming the socket such that one of a depth and a width of the socket is at least twice the other of the depth and the width.

26. (New) The method of claim 1, wherein forming the solder layer comprises forming a solder bar with a width or a depth that is at least four times the height of the solder bar.

27. (New) The method of claim 2, wherein depositing an adhesion layer comprises one of electroplating and screen printing the adhesion layer.

28. (New) The method of claim 2, wherein depositing under-bump-metallization (UBM) material comprises sputtering the UBM material.